

A STUDY OF CERTAIN CASES
CARRIED CO-OPERATIVELY
BY EMERGENCY RELIEF BOARDS
AND FAMILY WELFARE AGENCIES
IN FIVE CITIES IN PENNSYLVANIA

MADE UNDER THE AUSPICES
OF
THE STATE EMERGENCY RELIEF BOARD
OF PENNSYLVANIA
AND
THE FAMILY WELFARE ASSOCIATION
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FOREWORD

"An organization which submits itself for study has
within it the seeds of growth."

Studies are in the air. Perhaps nothing is more reassuring as to the soundness of the spirit underlying the emergency measures of the past five years than the readiness, rather the eagerness, to examine and to test the structure which has been built up so hurriedly and without architects' plans. So far in unemployment relief the sacred cows are mostly very young calves which can be hurdled in the daily stride of the agency which is both charting its path soundly and keeping its eyes on its goals. Moreover, private family agencies are finding new challenges to their skill, new opportunities for service to people more able to make constructive use of their skill, now that it is possible for them to be relieved of the heavy responsibility for "chronic cases" and huge case loads. Those agencies which have accepted the fact that their old job is no longer theirs are finding the situation - while fraught with all the uncertainty of all periods of growth - one of stimulation and exploration. Those who have not yet enlarged their community vision and adjusted their program to the newcomer in the field are, of course, feeling themselves somewhat threatened. Studies, even very small ones, are therefore especially valuable at this time before the "things that can't be done" become so formed and formidable that detours are necessary; or that stoppages and stultifications occur because the vision of the road maker is not lofty enough to see over the bovine bulk of established tradition.

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While this possibility of change makes for confusion and complication in the minds both of workers and of the community, including that part of it who are "clients"; nevertheless it has its exhilarating effect, refreshing to those social workers who have been accustomed to trying to moderate their own pace and chart their courses with sufficient circumspection to carry with them, Boards of Directors, contributors, and - more recently - clients. Perhaps the present substitution of the word "study" for the recently respected and still useful term "survey" is illustrative of our present stage in development.

This freedom, of course, can hardly last; nor is it desirable that it should. But out of the varied and various experiences, and the experiments and studies now being made there will develop sound principles of administration, relationships, training, on which a more permanent and reasoned structure of social services may be built. The present emergency philosophy which has served as a bridge hastily thrown across the stream of unemployment when it was at flood stage, is already being replaced by a surer structure. With greater strength and security will, however, come more rigidity. It is exceedingly fortunate, therefore, that those at the head of our social services are willing to take time and spend money to insure that the emerging structure shall be as sound as the examination of experience can make it.

This small study* represents an honest attempt to learn something of what is happening to clients in so-called "co-operative cases" outside the two large cities. It was essentially a fact-finding venture with the additional purpose of suggesting improvements in the service to clients who needed the help of both agencies. While the mechanics

* A statement of the bases of the study will be found in the appendix.

of co-operation are of very real importance, without an understanding of the fundamental bases of co-operation, mechanics fail or add more confusion to a situation already involved in the flux of continuing development. It seemed necessary, therefore, to correlate to a rough degree, the services as shown in the records and through conferences, with the education and experience of the workers, the amount and quality of supervision, the size of the case load, and the philosophy of the controlling Boards and executives insofar as that could be observed in the length of time available.

SECTION I - BASES OF COOPERATIVE SERVICE

A. Definition

"To interpret anything we must first see it clearly for what it is." Bertha Reynolds

The term "co-operative cases" was found to cover so wide a variety of practices, that a classification of the various types seems essential. The Century dictionary defines the verb co-operate as "to work or act together or jointly; to unite in producing an effect". Other more or less facetious definitions are too familiar to need mention except for the purpose of exclusion. Tested by the foregoing definition it will be seen that some of the instances of joint activity cannot be accurately termed co-operative. Since, however, the term is used in practice to cover them, they are listed here.

1. The first and most numerous type of "co-operative case" in two cities were those in which the private agency carried entire responsibility for the care of the family except that the C E R B paid the relief (within its limits) upon requisition by the family agency. In a sense, the family agency acted as a branch of the C E R B since it determined eligibility, made out forms and requisitions, and the C E R B had no contact with the family at all. The situation was in a sense somewhat confused by the fact that in a fairly large number of cases, additional relief was given by the F W A, (not always on a planned budget basis) sometimes to supplement the budget as a whole, sometimes for specific purposes not included in the C E R B budget.



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Many of these cases had been under care for an appreciable length of time from two to ten or even more years; and a very large percentage were hold-overs from the time when the private agency was the major administrator of unemployment relief funds. Something of the history of this practice and the basis of selection of cases will be given in a later section.

2. The second type of co-operative case found was one in which the public agency established eligibility and visited for its own purposes, which were interpreted as primarily economic, while the private agency assumed the responsibility for case work service. In the city in which this plan had been consciously entered into on about forty cases, provision was made for a conference of supervisors and visitors on each case and for additional periodic consultations. Both here and elsewhere this group included both cases carried first by the private agency and referred for relief; and a smaller number whose first contact was with the public agency and who were referred for service. Here again, though, it should be noted that the picture was somewhat confused by the fact that in a number of instances the private agency gave supplementary relief on its own judgment as to the needs of the family without necessarily consulting the C E R B.

3. Some cases were read in which the C E R B and the private agency were going in independently and without any consultation or agreement on plan, apparently on the assumption that the functions of each were sufficiently distinct so that there was no particular need of getting together, much as if, for example, a physician and an attorney should both be "active" in a given family.

4. A large category in some of the cities were cases in which the C E R B asked supplementary relief without any accompanying service

from the private agency, for purposes outside the budget of the C E R B. These requests were especially numerous for medical relief such as medicine, glasses, hospital arrangements, and surgical appliances; and for rent and furniture. Layettes and other clothing were also requested for families in which "there was no other problem".

5. No instances were found in the cases read of a fifth type of joint carrying which is common in some larger cities - that in which the C E R B visits to establish eligibility but then provides the relief so budgeted without further visits unless notified by the private agency that the situation has changed.

B. History and Attitudes

"With the rise of the (public) agency's standards -- There is a threat to the private society in the development of the E R B and a threat to workers in E R B in the assumption of exclusive rights to 'case work' on the part of the private agency."

Some brief statement of the background and the development of relationships between the private agencies and the C E R B's seems necessary to a clear presentation of the findings and suggestions. As would be hoped in cities selected for a study, the development varied considerably.

In three cities, the family society had been, in effect, the Unemployment Relief agency dispensing public funds, prior to the organization of the C E R B. All three had, of course, greatly augmented their staffs with, however, one significant difference in practice. Two agencies had made a very definite attempt from the start to protect the "regular" staff and work of the family agency, organizing the relief staff as a separate department with its own supervisors, type of record, and practices. When the C E R B was organized, the unemployment relief staff became the nucleus of the new organization, and in both cities the two responsible supervisors were still, at the time of the study, those taken over at that time. As would be expected, working relationships between these two agencies while not perfect - since even supervisors are human beings - were on the whole harmonious and understanding. One of these family agencies made a clean break at the time the C E R B was set up, relinquishing entirely any responsibility for administering public funds, though retaining some families for service and supplemental relief. The second private agency retained several hundred cases in which

its "regular" staff requisitioned C E R B relief. At the time of the study, this second agency had on its own initiative reduced the number of such cases by nearly seventy per cent, but still had about 250 of them in its load.

In the third city the family agency seems to have thrown the energies of its whole staff into the administration of unemployment relief with no such radical distinction between the unemployment staff and the "normal" staff. In this city the supervisors in the C E R B are not, at the present time, carry-overs from the local private agency staff. There may be a connection between this and the fact that working relationships are not so close as in the first two cities, although the supervisor of the family agency attends the staff meetings of the C E R B. This agency also retained several hundred cases in which it continued to requisition relief from the C E R B, and also on its own initiative had reduced the number markedly - to roughly 130.

In the fourth and fifth cities, the family agency was so small that except through its Board members, it seems to have played no active part in developing the C E R B, and in one instance has found itself rather seriously threatened by the new organization. In the other a new executive - the society's first "trained worker" - is working so closely with the C E R B as to seem sometimes almost a department of it.

In three of the five cities visited, the family agency was definitely suffering in some degree from the fact that its interpretation had been so largely based on relief needs, especially during the past four or five years, that referrals from the community and personal applications had dropped, sometimes seriously when the C E R B became known as the relief agency, although the case loads still remained high because of the practice of requisitioning C E R B relief and of retaining in some

instances a number of "chronic cases".

Since the ability to "work jointly" is as much dependent on mutual confidence and respect as on agency policy or mechanics, some brief statement of the attitudes expressed or indicated on the part of the workers in the two agencies may be suggestive.

It is significant to this subject that there was relatively little difference - taken as a whole - in the professional equipment of the supervisory staffs in the public and private agencies, almost an equally small number of school trained supervisors being found in both groups of agencies. Moreover, there was less difference in educational equipment of the visitors in the two agencies than might have been expected. College graduates, or people with experience in related fields, seemed on the whole predominant in both groups. More private agency visitors, however, - at least in proportion - had had some school of social work courses than seemed true of the C E R B agencies.

On the other hand there were definite "quantitative" differences in the case loads and therefore in the amount of time available for each case. The C E R B workers carried on an average from about 110 to nearly 150, while the private agency loads varied from about 40 at the lowest average to 90 at the highest. The public agency workers had much more clerical work to do than the private agency workers, but this is really less significant than it seems in respect to time available per client, as the records of the case workers were more comprehensive than those of the investigators. Also, the case workers had the same responsibility for filling out forms for the cases in which they were requisitioning C E R B relief, as did the investigators.

A more significant difference was in the amount of supervisory time even theoretically available per worker. The number of investigators

assigned to the supervisors in the C E R B's ranged from eight to - in one instance - 19; and the difference in the amount of detail work necessarily carried by the C E R B supervisors was far in excess of that required of the family agency supervisors. The highest number of cash workers for whom any one family society worker had direct responsibility was 6, while some had as low as two.

With these similarities and differences, it is not strange that there was evident a certain confusion of feeling and attitudes. They are listed here without discussion (for the time being) for what they are worth. Some of them seem to have their origin in the general failure of case work to define and interpret itself sufficiently clearly. Others lay in differing interpretations of the policy of the S E R B that its workers should concern themselves only with problems arising directly out of economic needs. More of this later also.

There was a definite feeling on the part of the investigators in at least one city that the case workers were "high-hat"; did not respect the C E R B workers and were therefore not free with them; and even that they regarded them merely as "grocery boys". This seemed more true when the contact was between an investigator and a family agency supervisor, than when it was between people of the same rank.

Some of the younger case workers on the other hand were decidedly on the defensive, feeling that more was expected of them than their training and experience equipped them to perform; and admiring the greater precision of the C E R B workers in handling investigations, relief, etc. This feeling was more than personal, in some instances the case worker feeling that the agency - even case work itself - was, in a sense, threatened.

In both sets of agencies, there was considerable feeling centering around the requisitioning of relief by the family agency; the case workers

finding a real conflict between the strict interpretation of the budget according to state rulings and the traditional private agency practice of making the budget to fit the needs of the particular family. This was true even of the families in which supplementary relief was given by the family agency from its own funds. Correspondingly, there were questions arising in the minds of the investigators and supervisors of the C E R B as to the accuracy and strictness of the case worker's determination of eligibility and interpretation of the budget, together with a certain uneasy feeling that the cases carried by the family agencies constituted a "privileged class".

In one or two instances there was definite impatience expressed in the C E R B at what was termed the "maternal" or "protective and indulgent" attitude of the case worker to a given family or individual, or to the case load in general. Interestingly enough, no definite impression was gained in any family agency that the opposite criticism of too harsh treatment could justly be made of the C E R B, though one older worker believed that the family agency was "kinder".

In one or two instances the C E R B workers seemed to feel that families should be referred to the family agency only after the investigator had done as much to solve its problems as possible; in other words, as a sort of last resort. In another, there seemed to be a tendency to use the family agency as a convenience; that is, to be called in as an easy source of relief, of special and unrelated services, and for the purpose of handling any which was difficult for an individual investigator.

Some of the family agency workers felt that the agency had a certain "moral responsibility" to carry the "chronic" cases which had been under care for a number of years without any marked improvement, until "something was accomplished". This attitude was found largely in one or two

agencies where case loads had risen to such a point during the past four or five years, that there had been little possibility of really effective work on any intensive level. To turn the cases over at the present stage was felt - if not stated - to be a confession of failure. Many of these cases were retained in the private agencies which still had case loads too high to permit of intensive work.

Perhaps related to this, was a feeling on the part of at least one C E R B supervisor that the quality of service which she could expect from the private agency was not such at the present time that she felt justified in referring cases to it. That this is not an isolated attitude is attested by the following quotation from the minutes of a meeting of C E R B supervisors: "There is no reason why the public agency should help to keep such agencies (i.e., a family agency which "has not necessarily equipped itself with the personnel to do a skilled service job") alive by sending clients to them who would not go of their own accord." In principle, no one would disagree with this statement, but in practice the loyalties of the community are frequently centered around known workers who under old conditions gave appreciated and needed service. On the other hand, it must also be admitted that supervisors who have gone over to the public from the private agency fields are sometimes not free to see the services of the latter objectively when they have not clearly defined for themselves, the function of the new agency.

Another C E R B worker questioned, rather penetratingly, as to whether one of the operative forces in the retention by the family agency of cases for C E R B relief, and the high frequency of some supplementary relief in the cases carried co-operatively, might not be an unrecognized lack of confidence in the efficacy of its case work

skill, and a clinging to relief as a tangible means of entry into the family.

On the other hand, there was little or no evidence on the part of the C E R B workers interviewed of any disposition to deprive families of any extra source of income except in one or two cases where it was felt that there was a close over-identification of the worker with the client or family, lasting over a period of two or three years.

Finally, there was a real question in the minds of some of the case workers as to how much information about family problems and difficulties should be given to investigators since the latter "were not supposed to be doing case work". In one city the functions of the two were considered to be so entirely separate that the family agency did not necessarily inform the C E R B that it was working with a given family. Here there was both puzzlement and a feeling of irritation and uncertainty because of the way in which the family agency workers "kept bobbing up in unexpected places".

Obviously, none of these attitudes present any serious or insurmountable obstacle to co-operation. They are given at length here partly to indicate this fact; and partly because it seems to the writer that one major cause underlies them all, and that they all point to one fundamental need: A sense of insecurity on the part of the workers, probably inevitable in this period of rapid changes; and the need of a philosophy of social services sufficiently broad to see the program as a whole, making possible a definition of function sufficiently basic and simply stated to be acceptable as the basis of co-operation to both case workers and investigators.

One thing seems entirely obvious: That - barring the almost inconceivable abolishment of some sort of comprehensive system of tax

supported relief agency - the private agency which sees no need for changing its standards and its field of work to meet the altered situation will find itself taking less and less important a place in the community. Competition may be the life of trade, but it would seem to be the death of effective social planning, either in individual cases or between agencies as a whole.

C. Some Basic Assumptions

Differentiation and definition of function is the basis of co-operation. If, therefore, we accept the idea of co-operation instead of competition as the controlling test of the efficacy of a social program, it becomes essential - though perhaps tedious to writer and reader alike - to make some attempt to define the essential services of the public and the private agencies as they appeared in the records. One definition, that of exclusive territory with each agency carrying full responsibility for the cases it accepts, seems feasible only in fairly small, excellently organized communities where the private agency has sufficient relief funds to carry all the cases needing intensive service. Like many logical and simple schemes, it breaks down when expected to function in a more complicated situation.

In the five cities visited, there was apparent definite need of the services of both a public relief and a private family welfare agency. Moreover, there was no question but that in a number of instances the contributions of both were needed in the same family at the same time. The question was not one, therefore, of either a family agency or a public agency, but rather of what the needs of individual families were whether the two agencies between them or individually were equipped to give that service; and of what categories of clients should receive assistance from both agencies, together with the type of working relationships which seemed to be least expensive to the agencies and, even more important, most productive of good to the client.

Basically, all social work, relief work, "charity" owes its existence to one fundamental human trait, the unwillingness of normal human beings to allow other human beings to suffer unnecessarily. A recog-

nition of this fact explains why even today the "relief of suffering" motif is the dominant one in most Chest or other financial campaigns. Added to this is a more or less clear perception of the fact that suffering on the part of some of its members is in a very real sense a menace to the community life as a whole. Therefore, from motives of "enlightened self-interest" we have tax-supported and voluntarily supported agencies. The philanthropic motive is, however, constantly at war with the motive of gain, in all those citizens whose incomes are not sufficient to their desires. Therefore, especially tax-supported agencies are subject to the danger of constant check when their programs go beyond the popular conception of what is essential for the relief of actual suffering, or of what the tax-payer can afford.

The private agency is freer, as Mr. Swift has pointed out, because its base of support (and therefore its "public") is narrower; but it also is feeling new pressures because of the fact that taxes are taking primary toll of its supporters. Moreover, as has been pointed out, in at least five cities in Pennsylvania, the interpretation has been so largely, in the past few years, on the basis of relief of suffering that there are real problems of community understanding, both in the matter of support and of referral of cases.

One of the reasons for the popular lack of understanding of case work is the great variety of diverse practices which are practised under the guise of that one non-descriptive term. Prudence, born of occasional previous excursions into territories which the winged ones scrupulously avoid, dictates that no attempt be made here to define it. Starting as the kindest and most economical way for the relief of suffering, case work soon assumed certain functions which we may call "community prophylaxis". That is, there were certain family sit-

uations about which members of the community demanded that "something must be done". Moreover, the earlier social philosophy assumed that need of relief was in itself a confession of the family's or the individual's inability to handle his own affairs constructively; and the case worker, as the representative of the community, had a right to "supervise" and "direct" the client as a condition of relief.

But the proof of case work is in the client; and increasingly those case workers who were sufficiently well-trained, objective, and experienced were forced to admit that little lasting good came to the family from even the kindest and most well-intentioned attempts to "treat" them from the outside. Only when the client became a very active and willing partner in his case treatment did development really occur. Moreover, case work, like medicine, has had to admit that there are certain situations which do not yield to the knowledge and skill which we now have at our disposal. Just as the skilled physician, once he has convinced himself that the trouble is incurable, spends only such time as is necessary to relieve suffering on such "chronic cases", reserving as much time as possible for attention to patients for whom he can do a good deal, and for research and prevention; so in some places case work has now reached the state of professional maturity where its most skilled practitioners are able to abandon its claim to omnipotence. That this has, in the inevitable swing of progress, led to some extravagances in a complete disavowal of any responsibility to the community, is another reason for the confusion which now exists. Moreover, the records read in some instances show sufficient evidence of actual harm done by unskilled, though excellently intentioned, handling of certain situations as to make it necessary to abandon the theory that while no good may come of attempts

at helping people, neither can harm come. A recognition of the dangers of blundering is as essential to the development of effective helpfulness in case work as it was in that of medicine.

Another point to be kept in mind is that development in case work was by no means uniform throughout any state, even any city; and that examples of all the varying attitudes and stages in the development of case work were found in the cities visited. In general the attitude of "supervision" of families goes with high case loads, experienced but untrained workers and supervisors, and the choice for co-operative care of the families where the problem from the community's standpoint is greatest, even though that family may not have responded more to treatment through several years than was almost necessary to survival.

Unemployment relief agencies, stemming as they have in most instances from the field of family case work, have not had to start "at scratch", as is sometimes assumed. In some instances, at least, the conception of the C E R B as to its service and function and relationship to its clients, may be ahead of that of the private agency which has held to its original impetus, considering change to be decay, instead of necessary to growth and preferring - to quote Santayana, "fidelity to adventure". It is only fair to state that in none of the five cities visited was this latter state found, though two agencies still were in the process of emerging from it.

The test of case work, therefore, which is used in this report, is not that it is done by workers in a private agency, or even by an experienced or a trained worker, nor the seriousness of the problem presented, but the development of the ability of the individual family or some member of it, to meet its own problems constructively

and to conduct its own life more satisfactorily to itself and to the community of which it is a part.

At the risk of over-pressing an already penetrating point, it seems necessary to stress here the pivotal importance of the training and vision of the supervisory staff. Young workers - given good initial equipment - almost invariably mirror the vision and attitude of their supervisor. This was brought into sharp focus in one agency where it was possible to identify almost without error the cases in which two different supervisors with widely varying case work skill had had contact with the same visitors. Difficult as it is to face, in concrete instances of some faithful employees, the fact is becoming increasingly apparent that with the taking over of the "quantity job" by the C E R B the job which some of the older workers were engaged to do and did well, no longer exists; for the private agency and different skills and training are required if it is to do its present and much needed job.

Finally - for this section - there is nothing in the history of government services to give reason for hoping that the public agency will be able to reduce case loads and increase supervisory staff to the point where the services of a really well-equipped private agency will not be a necessity in any reasonably complicated community. Sooner or later, the controlling pressure on any tax-supported institution, whether schools, courts, or social services, comes to be that of the greatest good to the greatest number at the least expense. Individuals who by reason of special disabilities, problems, or even aptitudes, who cannot benefit under this system will probably continue to need specialized assistance from private sources.

D. Special Skills

Perhaps one of the clearest ways of defining agency function as a basis for co-operation in individual cases is by examining and stating the areas in which each seems to show a special competence.

It has already been suggested that mere "seriousness of problem" does not necessarily constitute a case for the private agency; but in fact may indicate - if a careful exploration has been made - that it is definitely one for a tax-supported or corrective agency.

There were clearly observable, however, areas of excellence, as judged by the results to the families, in each type of agency - not by any means uniform in all the agencies of either type - but unmistakably characteristic.

The public agency seemed to show particular skill in maintaining the family pattern when it was already well established. In most instances major contact was had with the man who was normally the producing head of the family. In those C E R Bs where this practice was not maintained, the records gave evidence of the same derangement in family pattern as was apparent in the much fuller records of the family agency. It seems unnecessary to state that still in the United States, the accepted family pattern is that in which the husband is the major producing economic unit, and that more than is commonly recognized, his status depends on that fact; while the wife is largely responsible for the economical spending of the income, altho her status depends less exclusively on that since there are other tangible factors, such as her care of the children, housekeeping, etcetera. If, as suggested by the supervisors group of the S E R B, one of the functions of the C E R B is "the use of relief to conserve family life", it would seem highly important that the dominant economic unit be

made responsible for the support of his family, even though the support comes from relief funds instead of pay check.

In the private agency records there was evidence of failure and a tendency to see effectively the symbolic nature of the income in the family life, and to step over the man and make the relief plans directly with the spending unit, in a sense therefore, displacing the man - or making him feel displaced. When this happened once, the damage was done, and the records show few instances where the same worker was able to repair the deep wound unconsciously made and really achieve an understanding relationship with the man, though he was usually seen and consulted.

Perhaps this is much more an understandable trait in the private agency than when it occurs in the public. For the most part, case work skills were developed to meet the needs of women and children and incapacitated men. Non-supporters were seen, it is true, but usually in the interests and on the basis of previous contact with the wife; and unemployed men were also seen. But there is a fundamental difference between "seeing and consulting" a man, and making him responsible for the relief of his family as a matter of course. Skilled case workers are of course adapting their skills to the needs of normally self-supporting men, but in general the greater skill in maintaining the man's self-respect was found in the public agency. Relief almost inevitably tends to throw adults back into the only stage of development when they received the necessities of life without labor - childhood; and the records showed that too clearly expressed sympathy, rather than the business-like, impersonal though respectful attitude which assumes that primarily this is a business arrangement between the state and its citizens, sometimes hastens that reversion.

Even the set-up of C E R B offices, with some of the practices which at first sight fill case workers who are accustomed to dealing with

women (especially homekeeping women) with horror seem to be constructive to men. The waiting in line which seems necessary in many C E R B offices makes, it is true, the homekeeping woman feel that she is being held up to public scorn; but that same experience is part of the ordinary man's usual working and public experience. He stands in line for a job, for his pay check, to get that check cashed, for his automobile license and in other normal activities as a wage earner and a citizen.

One is also forced to conclude from reading the records and from observation that there is inherently a different relationship possible between a citizen and an agency of the government than between the same individual and an agency which is supported by voluntary subscriptions; and that the former relationship is the more constructive for the normally self-supporting and effective man. This was pointed up sharply in two or three records where the question of transfer to the C E R B of the relief function was being discussed with the family. There was a certain resentment expressed - not at the suggestion that the man apply for relief - but that the case worker thought the family had problems which required special attention sufficiently to warrant the family agency continuing care.

All this is of course evident in families whose stability is threatened only by lack of financial income and which have developed normal strengths within themselves.

On the other hand, in all of the five cities visited, with no request on the part of the writer for any particular type of family, there appeared certain categories or types of families which the investigators were unable to work with successfully. Many of these individuals or families were just the sort with which the family agencies - or at least some of them - were showing special skill in working.

Perhaps the most appealing is the very young family which has

not yet established the habit of living together and which with insufficient income and family pressures added to the normal strains of the first year or two of married life, need more help than the C E R B worker is equipped to give. A spectacular instance of this was found in the C E R B records. The family had been receiving C E R B funds for something over two years. The investigator upon the first visit, found simple but excellent furniture all paid for, and a husband and wife who were "like two young doves". He records his opinion that "these kids will be all right when John gets a job".

But the record shows the following steps in the family's progress between that time and this. First the family moved in with the man's brother, taking the furniture with them. Next, the baby was sent to the girl's sister. Then the man got a job and they re-established a home. But the job soon ended and the two young people and the investigator had to stand by and see the furniture sold to pay the rent and eviction costs. At the time the record was read, the girl had gone back to her mother, the baby was with the man's sister, and the man had left town to wander in search of a job.

In another case, each was living with parents and the girl began to go out with other men to show her husband that she was still attractive to some men if not to him.

On the other hand, in the private agencies one found records where at the beginning the man was with his mother, the girl, usually pregnant, with hers, and all the elements of a badly smashed young venture into matrimony seemed present. Yet, after a year or two of case treatment, most of them seemed well on the way to stable normal social living.

The difference in result seems sufficiently markedly different between the cases carried by the C E R B and those by most of the family

agencies to make it seem worth while for the C E R B supervisor to keep in mind when discussing these young couples, the possibility of their needing service from the family agency as well as relief from the C E R B.

A second category is that in which either the man or the woman is mentally disturbed or highly nervous. Almost invariably in the cases read, these families needed more time and a different skill than the C E R B could give, and one which the private agency more frequently than not was capable of giving.

Perhaps it is as well to state plainly here again, that unless specifically noted, the material and the suggestions are based not only on needs shown or the lack of competence (in the sense of effective skill) in either public or private agency, but also on the definite evidence of skill shown in the one agency or the other.

A third type of family seeming to need "co-operative service" from the private agency is the family which has been accustomed to much higher standards of living and which finds the adjusting to living on the C E R B scale more than it can do without either assistance or terrific emotional cost. Some of these families need to be referred to the private agency directly from the intake desk. More than one instance was found of high type families who had applied to the C E R B but were denied relief necessarily because their income was up to the standard. Several weeks or months later, they re-applied in broken health, or with the man deserted, or other serious developments occurring in the interval. Most of these clients had shown sufficient emotion at the rejection of their application to have indicated referral to the private agency at that first contact.

Cases of serious marital discord, especially in the instances of fairly young people, seemed frequently to require the services of both agencies. One serious question is raised here - perhaps out of place. In

one city there was a rather alarmingly large number of cases of decidedly irregular family groupings among the "co-operative cases". Several instances were found where the man was living with a woman not his wife and her children and the woman in turn had taken in a man to whom she was not married. This situation will be referred to later in another connection, but seems worthwhile to point out that in such instances, especially when this irregularity is accompanied by neglect of the children and other anti-social activities, it would seem wise for the public agency to refer the case to the family agency for exploration or diagnosis in order to determine whether there are the makings of a sound life for the children. If there are not, there would seem to be the need for stimulation of some effective measures of protecting the children. In this particular private agency little or no particular skill in handling these situations was found. However, the average case load was still around 60, so that the criticism is not necessarily a permanent one.

Another type of family in which co-operative service seemed needed and effective was that in which the health problem did not yield to C E R B care. This usually meant that there were accompanying personality and other difficulties which required attention, though in some instances it merely meant the health had been so depleted before the family applied that special or hospital arrangements were required.

A sixth sort of need was in certain families where the wife was a particularly poor or inexperienced housekeeper, or one who needed special help in budgeting, buying and cooking.

To the writer, there would seem no question if the choice has to be made as it usually must, between spending the available case work time on these families and on "chronic dependency" cases, that the sound thing from all standpoints is to spend it here where it will be most effective.

These families do, it is true, put more of a challenge to the skill of the case worker than those which have been accustomed to receiving help for years, but that is merely an added argument for maintaining a well-equipped staff.

The records revealed three other types of situations in which there was special need shown, but for the most part, no corresponding competence.

One was that of the young unmarried, but pregnant, girl.

A second was where older children in the family were either in revolt against the family situation and their whole life, or were being crushed by the family into its own mold. Usually the first time these young people appeared effectively anywhere but in the budget or on the face sheet was when they married, usually unexpectedly, left home, or got into serious difficulties.

Motherless families presented a constant challenge and need with no outstanding skill or facility shown to meet their problems. In only one instance was assistance given to enable a housekeeper to be engaged and in that instance the woman chosen by the man but paid for by the agency, was known to drink and be otherwise undesirable. There was no instance in these records of a practice found effective in other cities, where good older housekeepers who themselves are on relief are used to visit in these motherless homes, sometimes daily.

Finally, one of the C E R B supervisors felt that a much needed form of co-operation was in so-called "troublesome cases" which she would like to refer to the family agency, either for exploratory service, or in some instances for no more serious reason than that the particular C E R B visitor assigned to that geographical area was not able to work

harmoniously with this particular family.

Obviously, no family agency could possibly accept for care all of the cases in the above categories which are known to any C E R B. However, it seemed worth while to give them at length here as indicating the type of case in which, from the records read, co-operative services seem both most needed and most effective.

E. Evaluation of Present Methods of Co-operation.

Perhaps it may be well to give immediately the general impression gained from the records as to the effectiveness of the different types of co-operative methods stated in Section II before proceeding to a discussion of more fundamental matters, or of the reasons for the generally not too satisfactory state. If the statements seem categorical, the reader is asked to suspend judgment until he has read succeeding sections.

In the first place, the records gave little or no evidence that the families were better served by the practice of the private agency requisitioning C E R B relief, than if they had applied directly to the C E R B. This is not to be taken to mean that there was no reason for the family agency being active in the majority of those cases, nor that in a proportion varying in different cities, it was not giving services which the C E R B could not be expected to supply. It refers exclusively to the method by which the family agency had the only contact with the client, although the major portion of relief came from the C E R B.

On the contrary, there was evidence of confusion in the case worker's mind which communicated itself in some measure to that of the client, as to the source of relief, the restrictions of the public budget, the reasons for supplementation, etc. The net result was that relief was much more in the foreground of the records and obviously occupied a larger proportion of the case worker's and client's time and attention, than in the few case records read in which the case worker handled only the agency's own relief funds. It is worth noting here that the staffs of the two family agencies carrying the large numbers of such cases expressed - with one or two exceptions - a great sense of relief at the possibility of discontinuing the practice.

In the second type, the forty cases in which both C E R B and private agency worker were visiting - the latter for "service", the former for "relief" - there was still evidence of some confusion in spite of conferences between the two agencies and in spite of the fact that the case worker had carefully discussed the transfer with the client. The confusion seemed less due to the fact that two workers were entering - (in fact, as will be noted later, in some instances the advent of the investigator materially helped the situation) - than to the fact that although the C E R B was interpreted to the family as in charge of relief, supplementary relief was given by the family agency direct, and on application sometimes of the normal economic head of the family, sometimes of another member. Since the relief budget is necessarily far below the normal income of the family, the possibility of additional funds almost inevitably kept the relief problem still in the middle of the picture. Particularly was this true when both workers were dealing in a sense with "the family as a whole"; or when private agency funds were given at the wife's request when the man was making plans with the C E R B. Again a caution may be needed here. This is no argument that relief-supplement by the private agency were not necessary to case work, nor against the two agencies working jointly in these families.

On the contrary, these families on the whole showed greater gains in ability to handle their own situations and plan for a more normal life than those in the first category. Part of this may have been due to the fact that the family agency had selected the families in which there seemed the best chance of such an arrangement working for this initial experiment, but this is no argument against it, since the client is inevitably the third partner in any effective scheme of co-operation.

Another observation may be made here. There seemed no question but that there was less confusion in the mind of the client, and therefore a much better case work relationship was established in the relatively few cases which were referred to the private agency by the C E R B for service and supplementary relief than in those which, having been carried on the requisition basis by the family agency, were referred to the C E R B for relief. The reasons for this seem obvious. Few clients - in fact few people under economic stress - can separate their difficulties and problems into economic and non-economic; especially when the family agency continues relief. On the other hand it is quite simple for a family to see that it needs "something more than we (the C E R B) are able to give in the way of help and advice".

The assumption that, from the client's standpoint the functions of the two agencies are sufficiently different so that no confusion results from each agency visiting independently and without consultation, was not borne out in any of the few cases in this category which were read. Conflicting advice, concealment by the client from each visitor of the amount of relief received from the other, and sometimes a playing off of one against the other either unconsciously or with a fairly high degree of ingenuity seemed fostered by this plan - or rather lack of it.

In two or three of the cities visited the number of cases in the next category - the request for either supplemental relief with no service, or a special but quite definitely limited service such as continued taking of a child to clinic - was so large that it had become a very important drain on the time and funds of the family agency. Since these requests were usually received by either the supervisor or the executive, the expenditure in terms of the case work service to the community was more important than the numbers indicate. It is, however, interesting that in all five cities,

the family agency accepted as a definite responsibility the performing of these services while trying to keep the request within bounds of the agency's budget and time.

Four major practices were found here, with of course several variations within each.

The first was an acceptance of the C E R B's investigation and the furnishing of the relief asked without any pretense at making an independent decision. In at least one city, it was assumed that requests would not be made if not necessary, and requisitions of this sort were automatically filled up to the limits of the private agencies' budget for them.

The second practice was individual decision on the basis of fairly full presentation, usually over the phone, by the C E R B supervisor.

Neither of these practices were felt to be much more desirable than the practice of the family agency requisitioning C E R B relief, but were accepted as the cheapest way of dealing with an unsatisfactory situation.

In other cities and in some instances within cities using in general the first two methods, the family agency gave supplementary relief only when allowed to make its own visit. The reasons given for this were three-fold: The case worker frequently found other sources for the relief asked in relatives, church, lodge, etc.; it was felt that a careful examination of the reasons for such requests was necessary to the formation of a sound plan, and especially to the development of other resources for meeting these needs; and finally there were indications that the C E R B workers did not always recognize that the need for specific relief was only a symptom of deeper needs which must be met if the relief was to be effective. A more or less typical example of the last

situation was the C E R B's request for furniture for a very young couple, with the definite statement that "there is no other problem than the lack of furniture". Actually the case worker found that payments already made on a larger amount of furniture could be salvaged to provide for a sum sufficient to furnish the rooms with a little help from the girl's mother; and that the marriage had been a forced one, violently opposed by the boy's father, who had stepped in during the girl's absence, ordered the furniture returned, and carried off his son to work his (the father's) farm. In the end no money was given by the family agency, but the service necessary to the securing for the two young people and their coming child of any possibility of family life was forthcoming at a time when it could be effective.

The fourth practice was in a way a variation of the third - the strict confining of the family agency's investigation to the question of need for the particular relief asked and of resources to meet it. This practice obtained especially in one city where the private agency had established excellent working relationships with one of the Poor Directors who called upon it to make certain investigations for him. He was willing to accept the family agency's recommendations for relief, but not the C E R B's.

This area of "relief and no service" cases is perhaps one of the most difficult and puzzling of the co-operative services, not so much for the direct effect on the clients for whom it is asked, as for the indirect effect upon the case load of the private agency through the drain upon its time and funds, and the diversion of interest and focus of attention which the large number of such requests made inevitable. In one month within the last year, one private agency spent nearly \$200. on glasses and other medical relief for families on C E R B relief, not

active with the family agency. None of the private agencies were sufficiently well equipped as to staff and budget to give this service without loss to their continuous work.

When this point was discussed at a meeting of the Pennsylvania Inter-City Conference of Family Welfare Agencies, three other practices were reported. In one city there was no overlapping of the two agencies; the type of cases coming to each having been determined by a committee of the Council of Social Agencies, and each assuming entire responsibility for relief and service in its own load. Another private agency had made intensive investigation of resources in the families for whom such requests were made over a certain period and, on the basis of the results, established a more or less fixed policy of accepting no requests for relief unaccompanied by case work service. A third secretary reported that she presented to her Board each month a detailed report of the number of such requests and their cost in time and money.

Of the fifth type of co-operative case, i.e. that in which the C E R B establishes its own relief budget but visits only on a report of change in situation by the F W A, no instances were found in the records read. However, in at least one city, the C E R B workers had still not quite attained a perfect record of visiting each family every two months, and in a few instances the case worker assumed the responsibility for informing the C E R B of changes. When this took the form largely of transmitting the client's requests for additional relief, however, as it did in some instances, the results were not exactly constructive to the relationship between the client and either agency, nor between the agencies.

Obviously this is a situation requiring study and analysis and long time planning by both C E R B and family agencies. There are

indications of the need for the development in investigators of more resourcefulness in locating within the family's own connections sources of occasional special relief. However, one of the difficulties sensed here is the possibility that workers may feel that this must be counted against the budget, or depended upon as a regular source of income. There would seem to be a need for clearer instructions on this point within the relief agency.

Experimentation and demonstration are a traditional and valuable function of the private agency with its greater freedom of decision, and larger Board. It would seem, however, that enough experience has been accumulated in the fourth type of co-operation to make it advisable for staff and Board Committees of the private agency to correlate and analyze the findings, and to consult with the C E R B staff and Boards and the Council of Social Agencies as to ways in which burdens of satisfying needs which the C E R B cannot meet, (yet without the meeting of which the families suffer unduly) may be lifted from the family agencies to the potential bettering of its case work service. In general it seems sound to suggest that they be met from other tax funds.

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F. A Suggested Technique of Co-operation.

One thing seems indisputably clearly proved by the records read; the separation into service and relief even when no relief is given by the family agency, is from the standpoint of the family an artificial and impractical one unless the two functions are focussed in the separate agency workers and in different members of the family group. Confusion is, as has been noted, almost inevitable when both agency workers are seeing indiscriminately the husband and wife, and when both may be giving relief or advice to either. Yet the "grocery boy" idea of the function of the investigator is destructive. The investigator is to "concern himself with problems arising out of unemployment or the economic situation". But where in the linked chain-mail of cause and effect is the stop signal to be put, especially when the family is apt to attribute all its woes to the lack of employment?

To take the concrete illustration of a problem explicit in some of the best records read, and implicit in many others, - is the cessation of sex contact between a husband and wife who have up to the time of financial pressure experienced no difficulties in that area, a "problem rising out of unemployment" or not? And if it arises in a family where both workers are active, in whose province is it? Especially when the woman is usually the denier and the man the one who feels aggrieved?

The foregoing Gordian knot is not a hypothetical one. It is more or less typical of the difficulties facing workers daily in many instances. So far as the records showed, the one sword which gave promise of being sufficiently keen to cut it seemed to be a division not primarily on the basis of the agency's function, but on

that of the function of the individual within the family group.

Stated quite simply, this scheme of co-operation requires a focussing of the economic planning in the persons of the man (or the dominant economic unit) and the C E R B worker; while the service functions are focussed in the relationship between the woman and children or one of the older children and the case worker. This would not mean that C E R B worker never saw the woman or children or that the case worker ignored the man. But it would mean that all economic plans, even though they required supplementary relief from the private agency, would be made between the man and the C E R B worker. In certain instances it would also mean that the C E R B worker would discuss with the man other problems from his particular standpoint, referring him to the case worker if the situation was one necessarily involving the whole family, or beyond the time or experience of the C E R B worker.

This would, of course, require an agreement as to objectives on the part of the C E R B and private agency worker in order to avoid either worker unwittingly playing the part of mother-in-law; but the results in the few cases where this technique of co-operation had been stumbled on were sufficiently outstanding to make it seem worth while to pursue the method as a conscious experiment.

There is, of course, no simple solution of anything so complex as the profound disalignments which lack of the means of self-support brings about in family life. But if both agencies are fundamentally agreed that the preservation and development of family life is the real aim of relief giving and of case work, then it will seem worth while to go through even seemingly cumbersome experiments to find the best methods of preserving the pattern which has so far seemed most satisfactory.

Whatever family life may become in the future, at present the records read indicate that the present dominant pattern is the one earlier indicated - that the husband and father is expected to be the producing head of the family economically, and the wife and mother the distributing head; which brings about more of a partnership than would appear at first sight.

One is tempted here to give some instances of the demoralizing effect on man, woman and children of the giving of relief wholly through the woman, and the sudden falling back of the group life into normal lines when the man went on work relief and even when the "experimental plan" was embarked upon; but time and space forbid.

The concrete suggestion is made, therefore, that in co-operative cases the entire relief plan be discussed and decided upon (up to the point where the private agency's willingness and ability to give the supplementary aid must be determined) between the man and the investigator. The second step would be the request for such aid, from the C E R B to the private agency; and the third, the sending of the man to the private agency for the relief decided upon, preferably with a card.

When the request for relief initiates in some other member of the family, or the case worker finds that case work is retarded by the lack of certain necessities, the same principle should be adhered to. Within the family, the member making the request should be advised to discuss it with the husband, asking him to discuss it with the C E R B worker; and the case worker would call the C E R B worker and discuss both the need and the private agency's willingness to provide for it.

It may be objected that there will be instances when the

man is unwilling to ask for or allow to be put into his family relief which it really needs. If the need is really vital, then work needs to be done with the man to change his attitude. There is a real question as to whether material needs supplied against the will of the man are not too expensively bought in terms of family solidarity and self-respect. No evidences of this sort of situation were found in the records read, though there were some rather disheartening evidences of demoralization resulting when a member of the family, usually the woman, undertook to obtain relief on her own initiative whether from public or private agency or both and succeeded.

It is strongly urged, however, that until the inevitably unforeseeable difficulties in this plan are worked out, consultations be between supervisor and supervisor, rather than at first between worker and worker or worker and supervisor. This would also tend to put the relief on a planned rather than an emergency basis.

It cannot be too strongly stated here that the success of the plan depends upon its strict adherence. Even the discussion at any length of relief needs with the woman, on the basis of possible direct grant from the private agency was shown in the records to have several serious dangers. The first was that the client's attention was so fixed upon the possibility of relief that real case work was retarded. This was not so true when relief was given on a planned basis, but here another destructive tendency showed: the tendency on the part of the family to see the C E R B as the "sterner parent" and the private agency as the indulgent one; or when the man was applying for the C E R B relief and the private agency relief was given to the woman, there was an unhealthy division into "mine and thine". Childish as these attitudes seem, they were found in a sufficient number

of case records to make it wise to guard against their development. And it will be remembered that there was almost overwhelming evidence found in the records pointing to the fact that relief tends to throw adults back into childish reactions sufficiently frequently to make it necessary to frame the practices in order to prevent this deterioration.

It will be objected that if this plan is adhered to the man may not turn in all of the relief to the family exchequer. That is true, but there were also examples of the woman's using money given for one purpose, for quite another. When this occurs, the problem lies far deeper than to be reachable merely by a shift in the person to whom the relief is given. It may be that the man needs fairly intensive case work on a skilled level. But as has already been noted, this is not an insuperable difficulty when the relief plans are first made with him, and the C E R B worker shows him that he needs that "something more" which a competent case worker can give. It is also of interest to note that some of the best case work was done in families or with individuals where no relief whatever was given by the family agency.

In a certain few instances there was definite evidence that the relief plans should be made either with the woman or a child of working age, but these were few. A word of caution may be wise here. It is easy to fall into the error of believing that the economic head of the family is the person who is most likely at present to get a job. But if the principle of suiting the practice to the family pattern is observed, it will be seen that frequently this is an unsound practice, putting what seems to the child much burden on his too young

shoulders, and robbing the man of the status in the family which is essential to its unity.

There were one or two instances found in which it would seem really destructive to have more than one agency active, but only one or two, if the principle of focussing of function which has been suggested was scrupulously observed.

Also in this connection several records gave an indication that it is wise to challenge the somewhat general assumption that the most vocal person is necessarily the one with whom the most productive work can be done. This seemed particularly the case in families where there were children of 18 or over, especially those which had been known to social agencies for some time. The mother in the family was so vocally in the center of the picture that other members were pretty well blotted out, yet in many instances the mother had developed a high degree of imperviousness to any viewpoint but her own, and the family situation did not improve. In certain families where a shift of major emphasis was made from the mother to an older girl, the situation was materially bettered, though considerable skill was needed to keep sufficient contact with the mother so that jealousies were not aroused.

One mechanical aid to co-operation has already been suggested - the conferring of workers of the same rank between organizations. Two others may be suggested here, trivial as they may seem. One is that referral should be in writing (after the phone conference) and with the diagnosis and agreed upon plan rather than mere outline of history set down as a basis for continuing work and further consultation. The other is that some facilities be adopted which would pro-

vide for that mutual acquaintanceship between workers which does much to prevent and to break down feelings of defensiveness.

In all this is implicit the philosophy that the family is the basic unit of society, but that it is also a collection of individuals; and that normally the adult young person, though he or she may remain for the time being through desire or pressure of circumstance under the parental roof, is essentially a potential founder of a new family rather than any longer a member of the old.

It is also assumed that the family has a right to maintain the same pattern and freedom of choice - within the limits of the amount of relief available - when it is not self-supporting as when it is.

SECTION II - SPECIAL NEEDS AS A BASIS FOR
FUNCTIONAL DEFINITION AND
COOPERATIVE PLANNING

A. Supplementary Relief

As has been stated, the question of additional relief was a present factor in most of the co-operative cases read.

There were three major practices in addition to the requests for "relief and no service" already mentioned. They are mentioned in the order of ascending importance.

In some instances it appeared at least possible that relief was used as a more or less unconscious means of - to put it quite brutally - buying the right to give advice, rather than because it was a necessary part of case work plans. While the number of these cases, and the amount of money expended was not large, one questions whether there is any justification for it appearing at all.

More constructive was the relief given to relieve an acute situation, such as to prevent eviction, to supply gas, electricity, or such things as a stove; comparatively rarely, interestingly enough, to bridge over delays in the receipt of public relief, although occasionally a grocery order or coal was given when the family had not been able to make the C E R B grant last.

This type of relief giving is of course much more constructive than the first, but it still tends to put the landlord, for example who is most willing to be unpleasant, in the favored position; and it tends to perpetuate all the uncertainties and unsatisfactoriness

of "emergency relief" from which both public and private agencies have been trying to emerge. The most that can be said for it is that it prevents some physical suffering, though it does nothing to prevent the agonies of suspense and fear in the client; and though it discourages rather than encourages planfulness.

It is recognized that this form of relief giving has been resorted to in desperation and against all the philosophy of case work agencies because of the curtailing of their relief funds and the consequent need for economy, as well as the evident need to make relief "stretch" to cover the whole too-large case load. On the other hand, the effect on the clients - and it may be noted on the visitors - was none-the-less unsatisfactory.

The third and most constructive method of relief giving, whereby the greatest security was given to the family, and both investigator and case worker were freed from constant preoccupation with emergency needs so that they could do really constructive work with the family, was on the basis of a planned and understood budget.

It may safely be said that the third method is not only the most effective but the most economical - the first being, of course, the most wasteful. It is probably an appreciation of this fact that lies behind the SERB's disapproval of so-called "commodity" relief whereby the private agency is asked for rent, coal, or some specific thing. Both the first and second types penalize the higher type family, discourage planfulness on its part, and encourage disintegration by putting a premium in a sense on ability to get into acute situations or to bring pressure from citizen or unemployed groups. On the one hand there was one instance of a family which moved three times in less than two months, the rent and moving expenses being paid by

the private agency because of community pressure; on the other, an example of a self-respecting family which was without a stove in bitter weather until the physician who was called in to treat heavy colds and incipient pneumonia phoned saying he would not leave the house until a stove was delivered. Extreme cases, both of them, but typical of less dramatic confusion and conflict centering around relief when there are insufficient funds, no established policy and budget, and a too high case load.

It should also be suggested here, however, that it is somewhat difficult to see that the public agency has any right to dictate the private agency's use of its own funds, either as to spending or withholding relief in families in which both may be active. This is noted because in one city the more than half humorous statement was made that the "C E R B would not allow money to be given to families under its care". The family does not become either the property or the ward of the relief-giving agency, whether public or private - a fact which even the best of us sometimes need to be reminded of in these days of change and pressure. The citizen on relief - whether from the public or private agency - is not disfranchised in these days, though old attitudes still unconsciously rise to smite and trip.

In general there were found to be clearly defined types of needs which the public agency budget was not able to care for, and therefore where supplementary relief was requested from the private agency. Since they appeared in pretty much the same form in most of the communities, it may be well to list them here. The controlling factor in making the decision as to whether supplementary need was really required was whether it was essential to case work.

Perhaps the most important need was for rent, especially for higher type families who suffer excessively from being forced to move into neighborhoods where the rent allowance of the C E R B is accepted for families who have serious health problems for young couples who have never established a home and less frequently, for very large families. In one city practically 50% of the monthly relief budget of the family agency went for this purpose - not entirely, of course, to families receiving C E R B relief.

Requests for medical aid were so numerous that it seems worth while to devote a separate section to the working of the medical program as it appeared in the case records.

Furniture for couples needing a home - especially those who had never established one, or who had been "sold out", and furniture replacements was another need which was found in all of the cities. In some places, furniture shops or reconditioning plants have been set up as work projects, but this was not true in any of the cities visited, and furniture mostly had to come from the private agency.

In general, the clothing allowance of the C E R B seemed sufficient for decency and warmth, but could not include provision for the "extras", upon the possession of which the self-respect and ability to mingle in groups of many adolescent and older children depended. One C E R B supervisor found great need for "bigger and better clothing" for the older girls and boys. A private agency supervisor attributed many serious personality and behaviour problems to the lack of the sort of clothing which make normal social contacts possible to young people who have not established a sense of their own worth.

There was great evidence of need of relief - though few instances in which it was available - for special vocational training, re-training, practice and other courses for young people with no marketable skill, and for older ones who would not be able to return to their previous work. Sometimes no more than carfare, or clothes, or material was needed, but the lack of it was as effective as if the need had been a large tuition fee. It may be noted that there was a wide gap in several instances between the C E R B and the State Services for the handicapped, requiring special services and sometimes additional relief for its bridging.

Recreation was a serious and almost a total blank in most of the records read. Recreation projects seemed to be in large part centered, rather than located in the neighborhoods where most of the clients lived. Clothes and carfare were again necessities, the lack of which was making even a good program ineffective so far as many clients were concerned. In consequence, families were becoming "ingrown", men were finding it difficult to spend their time constructively, and boys were forming law-breaking gangs, with girls as "hangers-on".

Another need seemed definitely to be some provision for the payment of visiting housekeepers in motherless families. Few instances of really outstanding work with these particularly difficult situations were found, but the need was sharply apparent.

There were other needs to fit special situations, such as the payment of an electric light bill for a family which had been "burnt-out" twice - once within the last year because of an upset coal oil lamp. The treatment of the nervous fears of both the women and the children required the security of electricity which for the time being

was kept burning all night because of the fear of awakening in the dark and finding the house afire.

It is perhaps significant that there was comparatively little supplementation for food, coal, etc., and what there was, only on the most temporary of bases. Since that is true, the way toward co-operation through centralization of relief plan seems a fairly clear one.

B. Medical Relief

The medical program as worked out for families on C E R B relief in Pennsylvania has both its very real strengths and its weaknesses. Designed to keep the responsibility for the health of the community in the hands of family physicians, it seems to work excellently in the smaller cities and rural areas, and somewhat less effectively in the larger cities, especially those where there is an established tradition of the physicians and surgeons contributing free care through clinics and hospitals. This is as one would expect, since the larger the city, the less close and direct and permanent is the contact between physician and patient in the lower economic group.

The question of medical relief is a vexing one in all five cities, but the effectiveness of the service differed sufficiently to make it seem worth while to state some of the situations found. The writer hastily disclaims any competence in doing anything but setting down the facts as they appeared in the case records, and entirely on the basis of the effectiveness to the client.

The essence of the present plan seems to be that the patient have free choice of his physician. In one city, however, this was more honored in the breach than in the observance. Some of the physicians refused entirely to have anything do do with medical warrants, one having a sign "No Medical Warrants Accepted," on his door; another tearing the warrant across and throwing it in the waste basket in front of the client; others using less direct but equally definite methods of discouraging calls from C E R B clients. Still others were even less constructive, giving clients what seemed

to be the equivalent of 'old-fashioned broad-pill treatment. Some, and among them the most able apparently preferred to do their free work through the clinics and not in their private offices. On the whole, in this city, there was no question from the records read that -- except in the case of those clients who had previously established a real contact with a physician, or in the case of acute confining illness - for the most part the diagnosis and treatment received at the clinics was far more effective than that received from many of the physicians willing to accept medical warrants.

In another city many physicians also preferred to do their "free" work through clinics, but apparently in order to insure that no person not entitled to it should receive clinic treatment, no one was accepted for care at the clinic except on referral by the "family doctor". No referrals were accepted direct from social agencies. This system required, of course, that those people who had no "family doctor" should first apply to a physician in the neighborhood and from there be referred to the clinic. Once the patient arrived there he seemed to receive excellent care.

The rub, however, in at least three of the four cities which had clinics was that the clinics for the most part had no facilities for providing prescriptions or other medical aid, and that the medical program allows for the filling of prescriptions only when given by a private physician. In one or two extreme instances, therefore, an unlucky patient was forced to make the unhappy choice between excellent medical skill and no medicine, and less effective skill with medicine. The only alternative seemed to be the provision of money for the prescription by the private agency.

Moreover, in certain instances, especially in the cases of neurasthenic men, the system seemed to allow for - if it did not encourage - a shopping around from doctor to doctor, since the investigator or case worker was instructed against giving advice in the choice of a physician.

One first and quite definite step out of this dilemma would seem to be provision - perhaps through the Community Chests - of medical relief in the form of prescriptions through the clinic, either in a drug department or through a relief fund attached to the clinic. While there are definite objections to this system, the present system has sufficient drawbacks to it to make experimentation seem advisable. It is not inconceivable that the family agency, as part of its service to the community, might loan a worker to the clinic to determine the need of the patient for free medicine and to explore the need for a medical social worker, for an experimental period.

It would also seem worth while for a committee of the Board of the private agency to study the results to individual clients of the present system as shown in records and then to consult with a committee of the Medical Association to see what plans can be made to secure better services where needed.

On the whole the situation presents fewer difficulties in cases active with both agencies than in those active only with the C E R B, since the private agency uses its funds freely for the most part, in enabling the client to follow out the physician's treatment.

It would also seem wise for a committee of the family agency, and if possible of the public, or even better, of the Council

of Social Agencies, to study the whole question of the source of such medical relief as glasses for school children and other non-wage earners, surgical appliances, carfare for clinic visits, and other medical needs when there is no other reason for the private agency entering the family. In most large cities, this form of relief is no longer administered through the family society, but is attached to schools, clinics, or other health or educational institutions or agencies. The fact that it remains a function of the family agency in smaller cities may be because of the willingness of the agency to accept for an experimental time any responsibility not clearly acceptable to another agency; or it may indicate a persistence of a now out-grown concept, that the family agency was the only one equipped to handle relief economically and constructively. There is no question but that that was true earlier and may still be true in some communities, but with its increasing emphasis on case work, and the increase of professional workers in other agencies, the Family Welfare Movement is moving on from this position if indeed, it has not entirely abandoned it.

C. Needed Facilities

The private family agencies have almost from their earliest beginnings accepted as one of their functions the responsibility for experiment and for the stimulation of facilities to meet newly discovered or recognized areas of community need, whether directly for the benefit of its own clients, or for the benefit of the community as a whole. If this function seems to have been somewhat eclipsed through concentration on the development of case work skill, and more recently the carrying of large loads of unemployment cases, or seems to have been relinquished to the Council of Social Agencies both the community and the clients are the poorer for it. Ideally - and it can be practically - the family agency has in its records first hand evidence of community lacks which can be effectively used to demonstrate community needs. Even though the C E R B had the same information, the fact that it normally has a Board of seven to the family agency's twenty or twenty-four, gives the latter a much greater potential working force in this area.

Several situations which require committee consideration and community action for their correction appeared in the co-operative cases read. Only those are set down here, the correction of which would benefit the clients of both private and public agencies - since this is a study of co-operation.

In one city the facilities for enforcing the support of a family by the husband and father were so lax as to seem almost lacking. Men were known to be working and in the neighborhood, but refusing support to their wives and children, while sometimes living with another woman. A presentation of some of the situations found to the Bar Association after committee consideration might bring to birth some method of dealing with this situation to the advantage of the family

and to the relief funds of the agency, especially if the society were able to loan even for part time and a short period an adequate case worker to follow up such action as seemed wise.

The lack of recreational facilities within the reach and interest of the client group has been mentioned. It would seem eminently worth while for volunteers under the direction of the family agency or the Council of Social Agencies to make "surveys" of the districts in which the clients live, to find the relation of clients' dwellings to playgrounds, settlements, clubs and classes of different sorts, libraries, adult education groups, etc. A "survey" sounds formidable but it can be plotted quite simply on a large map with colored pins, etc. It would serve two purposes - to inform the workers of existing facilities and to point the arid spots. Out of this might grow plans for projects which could be followed out under the Works Division. In one city two records revealed rather outstanding leadership ability on the part of an older man in one instance, and a boy of twenty in the other, both of whom could have been much more effective if given help and equipment. Many other records indicated the need for warm (in the winter) meeting places, with some minimum of equipment and leadership.

The information as to vocational and training desires and abilities which might be obtained from the children of fifteen and over in cases carried by both or either agency might be used to influence the development of new educational projects under the schools or under work relief programs, and various other types of experience and information might be correlated and used as a starting point for Board activity as case loads are reduced to a working point and the case workers have a little time to do one of the essential tasks of the private agency - analyze and correlate experience in individual cases of mal-

adjustment so that it may be used to prevent the development of future troubles.

One further need may be mentioned here - that of having a skilled case worker at the intake desk of the private agency, who might also consult with the intake interviewers in the public in order to insure that clients are accepted for care on the first application. The records indicate that when this is not the practice, clients return later in serious difficulties which might have been prevented if they had been given help at the time. Just as physicians are realizing that early diagnosis is a condition of effective treatment, case workers are seeing that it is an unwise expense to allow social situations to get to the breaking point unnecessarily.

D. Relations with Poor Boards

It seems unnecessary to mention the Poor Boards after Dr. Bruner's comprehensive study. Yet they cannot be ignored in a study of co-operation since they are the oldest and most entrenched form of relief. One relatively satisfactory though cumbersome method has been mentioned earlier. At least, in this city the C E R B families do receive the relief from the Poor Funds even though they must do it through the mediation of the family agency. In one area in another city, the C E R B seems to be successful in getting certain types of relief for its families.

On the whole, however, the situation is about as far from satisfactory as is possible. In one city the Poor Boards will not give relief to any family known to be receiving aid from the C E R B. In the same city, the family agency has no co-operation with the Poor Board, although many of the families active with the agency receive Poor Relief. It is, however, on the direct application of the "needy person" sometimes before the assembled Board, and the independent investigation of the Poor Directors.

In another place the Poor Board recognizes a responsibility for certain forms of relief such as burials, etc., but refuses certain others, such as glasses.

It is recognized that the public advocacy of the Public Welfare Law by the social agencies makes this a particularly difficult time. But that fact would make it seem all the more necessary for the executives, Boards, and Councils of Social Agencies to persist in attempting to work out some modus operandi, instead of leaving it to the individual investigators and families, who are least equipped to do it and often also most defenseless.

The agitation for the Public Welfare Law may have the additional effect of making the Poor Boards more sensitive to public opinion and therefore more accessible to well worked out plans presented by influential members of the community. Since the family agencies have longer experience, larger Boards, freer access to the Council of Social Agencies and other groups for forming public opinion, as well as on the whole less pressure, and better relations, it would seem eminently worthwhile for committees of these agencies to study their own situations in the light of Dr. Bruner's study and promulgate a plan for effective relationships simple enough to be practicable even under present conditions.

SECTION III.- CONCLUSION

"Before 1930 private agencies", according to the Report of Mayor LaGuardia's Committee on Unemployment Relief, "found that a problem of personal maladjustment frequently lay behind the economic difficulties of their clients"; but "the -- men and women who are unemployed today -- as a result of the depression cannot be regarded as maladjusted individuals in need of case work any more than the survivors of an earthquake. If special psychological care is needed it is due largely to the failure of the community to adequately meet the problem of unemployment and relief". In general the case records read seem to bear this out with one or two very important exceptions. The first is that prolonged unemployment may - and sometimes does - endanger or even wreck the balance and adjustment which has been established, beyond the point where the mere supplying of relief or even work can re-establish it; the occasional newspaper reports of men who are killed - through some mis-step - on the first day of employment after years of idleness are only dramatic examples of many other wounds to self-respect which need the special skill of the case worker. In a sense their emotional condition may be compared to the physical condition of people who have been without food, or water, so long that a normal amount of it may be fatal.

Another thing to be kept in mind is the fact that some people's mental, emotional and personality balance may be on so precarious a level that even the anxiety preceding the application for relief may be enough to unsettle it, and while the recuperative balancing powers of human

beings is a thing to marvel at, nevertheless it is a fallacy to assume that they are like the weighted dolls which bob up smilingly no matter how often knocked down, so soon as the particular weight is removed.

Another qualification to the statement quoted is that "case work" is so loose a term, that it lends itself to a wide variety of interpretations and misinterpretations. A lay committee is not to be blamed if it fails to see any very real similarity between the work with clients receiving "intensive therapy" from a trained and experienced case worker and that which an intelligent but inexperienced college graduate with a major in English Literature provide for 100 to 150 families of assorted sizes and conditions. Can both be described by the same term? If one is called case work and the other "not case work" is there not a danger that there will seem to be a hint of disparagement in the negative term.

Miss Lucas suggests that both extremes - and all the variants in between - are case work, but different specialties or variations of it are required to meet the needs of different clients. This would be in line with the description given by this writer in a bulletin on Social Case Work published in 1933, the opening sentence of which reads "Case work is the professional skill which has been developed to help individuals meet their personal and social problems when these are beyond the ability of those persons and their natural resources to solve. It is an intensification of the general skill of dealing with human relationships".

It is, of course, beyond the province of this study to propose definitions or new terms. The important thing seems to be that these differences be recognized, and that the work be done with a real measure

of skill, and of fitting of the means to the need.

We might, on the basis of the records read, phrase that thinking a bit differently in terms of the skills of public and private agencies, stressing, however, the fact that the same philosophy underlies both; respect for personality; the belief in individual rather than mass handling of human beings; and the seeing of both client and worker in relationship to the community. On this foundation the public agency is in the process of erecting a method of relieving the need of "ordinary" families in the way which will be least destructive to their self-respect. At its best, this involves the accenting of the normal features of the situation, a heightening of the "citizen to government" aspects, and a conscious effort, while seeing the person always as an individual, not to make him feel "singled out" or "different". Even the prosecution of people who obtain relief fraudulently, if it is done without animus and scolding, becomes to the honest citizen a protection of his rights, as well as a punishment of the ill-doer. Even to the justly prosecuted, it is part of the thing he might expect from a government agency. Justice first is what the ordinary citizen wants from the state, and justice requires a setting of the scale to fit the norm.

But from Plato on it has been recognized that justice for the many may be injustice for the few and that the real essence of equality is that unequal things shall be treated unequally. Hence we have a need for privately supported agencies who can give the help needed so that justice shall not - paradoxically - become injustice for those who need special assistance. It takes a different sort of skill to help constructively in situations where there are serious emotional and mental problems; or where some hitherto missing experience in growth needs

to be supplied; or even where the environment of an individual or a family needs organizing constructively rather than destructively. That this is a sort of community necessity - in anything but fairly uncomplicated communities - is evidenced by the experience of more than one city which abolished its family society when the Unemployment Relief Bureau was set up on the assumption that there was no further need for it. Within a fairly short time, small associations, frequently under church auspices, were being formed to "look after exceptional cases". The sad thing is that the work is being done on a volunteer and unskilled basis and the process of "organizing charities" into a family society may have to be lived through again, to the loss of the clients and therefore of the community.

The private agency has, therefore, an important service to render, but it cannot do so without adequate personnel, lowered case loads (in most of the cities visited) and that backing of the community which comes from an understanding of the agency's function and the need for it, which comes partly as the result of excellent work, partly as the outcome of experience of Board and Committee members, and partly of conscious interpretation. Where the family agency feels seriously threatened by the C E R B, it would seem well for it to first examine its case work as to quality; on the basis of that, scan the equipment of its staff; and then analyze its interpretation and community relationships. The fear of reducing the case load to a point where good work may be done seems to be an indicator of a need for this sort of examination and for planning based on it. It is not, however, necessarily an index of poor case work, since the private agency which was really vocal on this point had the lowest case load and was doing on the whole the most professional and effective work of the cities visited.

The fear was sensed in other situations, and was the more serious when it was not recognized by the agency.

If the C E R B feels that it can "do the whole job", it might examine the depth of its knowledge, the experience of its supervisors, and what is happening to the sort of families listed in Section V who have been on relief, for example, for two years.

Obviously it follows that, in the opinion of the writer, the records indicate a serious loss to the community when the family agency spends much of its time - if it is really equipped to do case work - on "making things easier for the C E R B", and its relief families by supplying incidental services, especially in the field of "relief and no service"; or in making investigations and requisitioning C E R B relief. It would seem to the writer that both agencies might spend effort in developing some other source, logically it would seem from the Poor Boards, for special relief needs where these are not connected with the need and desire for case work. Where the family agency is not equipped to give skilled service, the records, as has been stated, show that no magic good results to clients or community from contact with the form but not the substance of a case work agency.

The records indicate that there is without doubt a need for both agencies' services at the same time in certain families. As the C E R B workers deepen their own experience, develop and define their own skills, and probably widen somewhat their interpretation of "problems arising from unemployment", they will probably see more, rather than less, need for case work service from the family agency, because their understanding of human personality and their awareness of significances will also deepen. Hopefully the private agencies will

see corresponding need of raising personnel standards where necessary. If they do not, some other agency will probably be organized to do it, or there may develop a case work department within the C E R B set-up.

At present the greatest barrier to effective co-operation seems to be a certain defensiveness which is not too serious, since in many instances it seems to grow out of the fact that each agency is so thoroughly occupied with the necessity for developing and perfecting its own work and lessening the inevitable but uncomfortable gap between its ideals and its performance - that it has no time to get acquainted with its neighbors. Where, however, this attitude has its roots in a fixed feeling of superiority in either public or private agency, there seems no question that that agency's "high hat" is due for a tumble in the mire, since superiority is apt to be static, and social services to be worth the community's maintaining must be in a constant state of adaptation, change and growth.

Appendix

The method of this study was simple. Since the aim was to find out what was happening, rather than to get information on specific points, no schedules were prepared or used.

The first three cities were selected by the S E R B and the F W A partly because of their differences; and partly because co-operation was assured in both public and private agencies. The last two cities were hastily visited to gain information on certain phases of co-operation which had been indicated in the other cities but on which the writer felt the need of more information.

City A was an industrial center with a population of 143,000. Slightly more than two weeks was spent there and 77 records were read, 59 private and 18 public.

City B had a population of 85,000. Slightly under two weeks was spent there. 57 records were read - 37 private, 20 public, and relatively more time was spent in individual and group consultation.

In City C, (16,000 population) the private agency executive was new. 25 records were read; 6 public, 19 private, and conferences were held with the area supervisor and a member of the field staff. Only twenty-four hours were spent here.

Even less time was spent in City D (44,000 population) when it was found that the family agency executive had just resigned and conditions were in a confused state. However, a conference was held with her and with the area supervisor and one of the district supervisors of the C E R B, and 8 records were read in the private agency.

About a day and a half in actual time was spent in City E, (65,000 population) but the working time was a little more than two days. The executive of the family agency and one of the supervisors of the C E R B were consulted, and twelve records of the private agency and eleven of the public agency's record on the same families were read.

In all, therefore, 190 records were read; 122 in the private agencies and 68 in the C E R B's.

The method of selection of the case records was somewhat different in the first two and the last three cities.

In City A, the private agency selected records which it felt to be "typical" of the co-operative cases. The public agency selected ten records showing "good work". These records were supplemented by a sampling of the private agency's co-operative records, which was followed by additional records carried by certain case workers who seemed to have been slighted in the general sampling. The C E R B's records on these same cases were read, to be certain that nothing important was being missed, although in all except the "experimental" cases the records contained little information beyond forms and reports from the family agency.

In City B, the supervisor of the private agency selected cases in which the agency was requisitioning C E R B relief. Each case worker was then asked for one or two records which she felt showed her best work. This was followed by a sampling of the co-operative cases and additional records to get a picture of each case workers methods. The supervisor of the C E R B selected records which she felt showed good work on that agency's part.

In both these cities, personnel records were consulted, staff meetings attended, and conferences held with the executives and supervisors of both agencies separately and together.

In the remaining three cities, the private agency selected the records to be read, and in two of them, the C E R B's records on the same cases were gone over. In one city only in this group, were records selected by the C E R B as showing good work, read.

If an apparently disproportionate amount of time was spent in the private agencies, it was because most of the material for the study was to be found there, both because many of the co-operative cases were carried entirely by the private agency, and because their records were much the fuller.

In both City A and B, a meeting was held at the beginning of the visit with the two executives and supervisors to get their suggestions and to agree upon procedure. In both cities the findings and recommendations in that particular city were presented to a committee composed of two members of each Board and the executives and supervisors. It may be worth noting that in both instances findings and recommendations were fully discussed with the executives and supervisors, and to a certain extent with the staffs of the private agency at intervals. Perhaps it was as much due this procedure as to anything else that the recommendations were accepted in both cities and progress has already been made in putting into effect the major suggestions. Not all of the suggestions made have been listed in this report, but it does contain all with more than a purely local significance.

